



State of Washington

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Mailing Address: 600 Capitol Way N - Olympia, Washington 98501-1091 - (360) 902-2200, TDD (360) 902-2207
Main Office location: Natural Resources Building - 1111 Washington Street SE - Olympia, WA

DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE (DNS)

Name of Proposal: SCATTER CREEK AND WEST ROCKY VEGETATION RESTORATION

Description of Proposal:

This project is intended to restore native bunchgrass prairie on WDFW wildlife areas. South Puget Sound prairies have been largely lost through agricultural and residential conversion and through invasion of remnants by exotic plants such as Scotch broom and tall oatgrass. Scatter Creek and West Rocky Prairie Wildlife Areas are managed to protect and restore high-quality native grassland communities and wildlife populations. A major focus at both Wildlife Areas is recovery of two endangered butterflies, the Mardon Skipper and Taylor's checkerspot, and habitat restoration for the Mazama pocket gopher. The butterflies require low density of Scot's broom, short native vegetation, and specific foodplants throughout the year. Scot's broom and exotic grasses are considered to be significant threats to Mazama pocket gopher. The prescribed burns are delineated to begin to enhance these habitat characteristics for all of these species, as well as other state Species of Greatest Conservation Need like vesper sparrow, Puget blue, and valley silverspot butterfly, and state and federal listed plants like golden paintbrush, rose checker-mallow, and Mule's ear.

Restoration of native Roemer's fescue dominated grassland necessitates control of non-native grasses such as tall oatgrass, sweet vernalgrass, velvetgrass, and bentgrass. Exotic herbaceous species including cat's ear, St. Johnswort, sorrel and oxeye daisy also occur extensively and require control. Fire is a pre-planting tool that kills Scot's broom effectively, reduces moss and increases bare ground. Burning will be used in conjunction with herbicide applications to help control the non-native species, especially exotic grasses like tall oatgrass. Restoration involves first burning off existing vegetation, then applying herbicides to resprouting invasive plants, then replanting with native species. The combination of first burning, then applying herbicides, provides the best control of dense populations of invasive plants such as Scotch broom and tall oatgrass.

Restoration units, where prescribed fire, followed by herbicide application, seeding, and planting are outlined on maps at the end of this document. Restoration units total 41 acres at West Rocky Prairie and 61 acres at Scatter Creek. Professional fire crews will be used for all prescribed fire activities. In addition, spot spray to control noxious weeds and other exotics will occur over approximately 140 additional acres at both wildlife areas. Herbicides used include glyphosate, garlon, and fusillade.

Proponent/Applicant:

David Hays, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
1111 Washington Street, 5th Floor Natural Resource Building, Olympia, WA 98501-1091
360-902-2366

Location of Proposal: WDFW Scatter Creek and West Rocky Wildlife Areas, Washington, Thurston County; West Rocky Wildlife Area: Section 1 & 2, Township 16 North, Range 02
West WM and Scatter Creek Wildlife Area: Section 25, 35, 36, Township 16 North, Range 03
West and Section 30, Township 16 North, Range 02 West.

Lead Agency: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

WDFW has determined that this proposal will likely not have a significant adverse impact on the environment. Therefore, state law¹ does not require an environmental impact statement (EIS). WDFW made this determination of nonsignificance (DNS) after we reviewed the environmental checklist and other information on file with us.

We issued this DNS according to state rules.² We will **not act on this proposal for 14 days** from the date we issued the DNS. Agencies, affected tribes, and members of the public are invited to comment on this proposal or DNS. We must receive your comments within 14 days of the date of this letter. This means we must receive your comments by: **March 8, 2013**.

Method of Comment:

The following procedures shall govern the method to comment on agency SEPA proposals. Comments received through these procedures are part of the official SEPA record for this proposal.

You can submit your comments any one of the following ways:

- Email to SEPAdesk2@dfw.wa.gov
- Online at the WDFW SEPA website comment link at: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/sepa/>
- Fax to (360) 902-2946;
- Mail to the address below.

Responsible Official: Bob Zeigler

Position/Title: SEPA/NEPA Coordinator, WDFW Regulatory Services Section

Address: 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, WA 98501-1091

After the comment period closes, applicants may view the updated status of this proposal on the WDFW SEPA website: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/sepa/> Once the status is posted as final, applicants and permittees may take action on the proposal. When a proposal is modified or withdrawn, notice will be given in accordance with state law.¹

If you have questions about this DNS or the details of the proposal, contact Bob Zeigler at the address, e-mail, or fax number above; you can also call him at (360) 902-2578.

DATE OF ISSUE: February 21, 2013

SIGNATURE:

**Footnotes**

1. RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c)
2. WAC 197-11-340(2).